



U.S. Small Business
Administration

What you need to know about the SBA and our partners

By: Jordan Belser, Public Affairs Specialist, SBA Wyoming District Office

CASPER, WY – It's practically impossible to overstate the importance of small business in Wyoming. The small business owner is as much a representation of the state as the bucking horse and rider.

According to the most recent federal data, more than 65,000 small businesses currently operate here, and that figure accounts for 98.8 percent of all businesses in Wyoming. These businesses employ more than 137,000 workers – roughly 62 percent of the entire workforce.

Small businesses also account for roughly 81 percent of all construction employment, 88 percent of all educational services and 52 percent of manufacturing.

So, what do all these numbers mean? They mean Wyoming runs on small business.

But despite the vital role small business plays in the Wyoming economy, far too many current and prospective small business owners aren't aware of the benefits available to them through the U.S. Small Business Administration and our strategic partners.

Whether you're looking to start, grow or fund your business, there is a resource available in Wyoming.

Partners and Resources

The SBA is proud to partner with the State of Wyoming in the pursuit of strengthening, diversifying and expanding the role small businesses play across the state. The Wyoming Business Council (WBC) is the state funding partner for two of SBA's Resource Partners in Wyoming: the Wyoming Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network and the Wyoming Women's Business Center.

The Wyoming SBDC Network is a partnership with the WBC, The University of Wyoming and the SBA. They provide a host of services to current and prospective small business owners, including business planning, marketing and financial planning. The SBDC has relationships with some of the best business experts, lenders and organizations in the state and can help your business in a time of disaster, growth or expansion. They have offices in Casper, Laramie, Cheyenne, Jackson, Gillette, Powell, Riverton and Rock Springs. You can find out more about the SBDC Network at www.wyomingsbdc.org.

The Wyoming Women's Business Center (WWBC) is dedicated to helping entrepreneurs across the state start, grow and develop their business. They offer training, guidance and funding options, and have a tremendously knowledgeable and helpful staff. You can see what the WWBC has to offer at www.wyomingwomen.org.

The WBC has many resources available to Wyoming businesses, including State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) funding designed to help eligible small businesses significantly grow the state's export sales. Services under the STEP Program are funded in part by the WBC, and in part by the SBA. Funding is provided to qualifying "clients" by STEP grant recipients such as the WBC.

The WBC has used STEP funding to host helpful webinars and training events for Wyoming businesses interested in exporting their products and services. They've also used the funding to send business owners to out-of-state tradeshow, where they can display their product and expand their reach to a different geographic area. It's a great tool for helping businesses who want to get into the world of exporting.

For a detailed look at everything the WBC offers, feel free to check them out at www.wyomingbusiness.org.

We, along with the Wyoming Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), can show you how to do business with the federal government. The government contracting market is a multibillion-dollar enterprise that encompasses everything from computer engineering to landscaping and food services. If you're interested in selling to the federal government, we encourage you to check first with the PTAC – they're the resident experts for everything contracting, and serve businesses throughout the State of Wyoming.

To learn more about the Wyoming PTAC, please visit www.wyomingsbdc.org/home-test/ptac-government-contracting/.

For Veterans

The SBA also has several resources available to veterans. We provide a quarterly "Boots to Business" workshop at F.E. Warren Air Force Base as part of the DoD's Transition



Assistance Program (TAP). This program is built for service members currently transitioning from active service and gives them the information they'll need to decide if opening a business is the right move.

We also have a “Boots to Business: Reboot” program that is available to veterans of all eras. We're actively looking for communities in Wyoming that might be interested in this one-day event, so if you think your hometown would be a good fit let us know.

Additionally, the Veteran's Business Outreach Center (VBOC) provides tremendous support to Veteran business owners. Our VBOC representative is Brian Clemons. For more information, please visit www.vbocregion8.com.

The Bottom Line

Here's the thing: neither we – nor our partners – want to be the best-kept secret in Wyoming. If you're considering venturing into the small business world, please let us help you on your journey. If you're looking at ways to strengthen and grow your business, we can help with that, too. Maybe you don't know exactly what you want – we'd still love to assist you anyway we can.

Our office is in Casper, but we frequently travel around the state. We're available by phone at 307-261-6500, and you can visit us and check our calendar of events at www.sba.gov/wy. If you'd like to reach me, my email address is jordan.belser@sba.gov. Don't forget to follow us on Twitter @SBA_Wyoming.

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